

Classroom Instruction

That Works

Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement, 2nd Edition

Chapter 3 Cooperative Learning

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Why?

- *Students need more than intellect. They need ability to function effectively in an environment that requires working with others to accomplish a variety of tasks.*
- *Elements*
 - *Positive Interdependence*
 - *Face-to-Face Promotive Interaction*
 - *Individual and group Accountability*
 - *Interpersonal and Small group skills*
 - *Group Processing*

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Include Elements of Positive Interdependence and Individual Accountability

- *Teachers set the stage for ss to be responsible for their own learning; the learning of those in their group; and the ability to demonstrate what they know, understand, and are able to do.*

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Keep group size small

- *No more than 5 students*
- *As groups get larger, external and internal motivation tend to decrease and members of large groups tend to feel that their individual contributions will go unnoticed.*

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Use cooperative learning consistently and systematically

- *Promote CL as the dominant approach but also integrate competition and individual work.*
- *Most effective when used at least once a week*
- *Balance CL with opportunities to practice skills and processes independently.*
- *Limit Grouping by ability*
 - *can limit the knowledge and experience available to the group and lead to "group think"*
 - *can have negative effects on ss' self-efficacy if they perceive they in a group the teacher has low expectations for.*
- *Does not reflect the world of work*

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Use cooperative learning consistently and systematically

- *CL is a process*
 - *Teach steps, provide practice, and clearly define norms*
 - *allow ss to practice their roles and give feedback to other members of their group*
- *Use different types of groups*
 - *Informal - few minutes to entire class period*
 - *Formal groups - complete an academic assignment*
 - *Base groups - long-term (semester/year) to provide support over an extended period*

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Today's Learners

- Diversity - culture, learning style, levels of understanding
- 21st century requirements - collaboration and creating
 - use variety of media to produce nonlinguistic representations
 - requires more creativity than memorizing info and completing worksheets

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Tips

1. Establish norms
2. Teach processes; model; ensure they understand required social skills
3. Provide additional instruction, practice, and corrective feedback on social skills
4. Ensure CL aligns with the intent for learning.
5. Use well-structured tasks - clear goals for learning, responsibilities for each member, and maintain individual accountability
6. Design tasks to include strategic use of other strategies that help ss deepen their understanding and use knowledge meaningfully.

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